

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. J. RES. 40

JOINT RESOLUTION

To honor the achievements and contributions of Native Americans to the United States, and for other purposes.

1 *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Native American Her-
5 itage Day Act of 2009”.

1 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

2 Congress finds that—

3 (1) Native Americans are the descendants of
4 the aboriginal, indigenous, native people who were
5 the original inhabitants of and who governed the
6 lands that now constitute the United States;

7 (2) Native Americans have volunteered to serve
8 in the United States Armed Forces and have served
9 with valor in all of the Nation’s military actions
10 from the Revolutionary War through the present
11 day, and in most of those actions, more Native
12 Americans per capita served in the Armed Forces
13 than any other group of Americans;

14 (3) Native American tribal governments in-
15 cluded the fundamental principles of freedom of
16 speech and separation of governmental powers;

17 (4) Native Americans have made distinct and
18 significant contributions to the United States and
19 the rest of the world in many fields, including agri-
20 culture, medicine, music, language, and art, and Na-
21 tive Americans have distinguished themselves as in-
22 ventors, entrepreneurs, spiritual leaders, and schol-
23 ars;

24 (5) Native Americans should be recognized for
25 their contributions to the United States as local and
26 national leaders, artists, athletes, and scholars;

1 (6) nationwide recognition of the contributions
2 that Native Americans have made to the fabric of
3 American society will afford an opportunity for all
4 Americans to demonstrate their respect and admira-
5 tion of Native Americans for their important con-
6 tributions to the political, cultural, and economic life
7 of the United States;

8 (7) nationwide recognition of the contributions
9 that Native Americans have made to the Nation will
10 encourage self-esteem, pride, and self-awareness in
11 Native Americans of all ages;

12 (8) designation of the Friday following Thanks-
13 giving of each year as Native American Heritage
14 Day will underscore the government-to-government
15 relationship between the United States and Native
16 American governments;

17 (9) designation of Native American Heritage
18 Day will encourage public elementary and secondary
19 schools in the United States to enhance under-
20 standing of Native Americans by providing curricula
21 and classroom instruction focusing on the achieve-
22 ments and contributions of Native Americans to the
23 Nation; and

24 (10) the Friday immediately succeeding
25 Thanksgiving Day of each year would be an appro-

1 piate day to designate as Native American Heritage
2 Day.

3 **SEC. 3. HONORING NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE IN THE**
4 **UNITED STATES.**

5 Congress encourages the people of the United States,
6 as well as Federal, State, and local governments, and in-
7 terested groups and organizations to honor Native Ameri-
8 cans, with activities relating to—

9 (1) appropriate programs, ceremonies, and ac-
10 activities to observe Native American Heritage Day;

11 (2) the historical status of Native American
12 tribal governments as well as the present day status
13 of Native Americans;

14 (3) the cultures, traditions, and languages of
15 Native Americans; and

16 (4) the rich Native American cultural legacy
17 that all Americans enjoy today.

Passed the House of Representatives June 2, 2009.

Attest:

Clerk.

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